

Thousand Oaks City Council and Planning Commission
2100 Thousand Oaks Blvd.
Thousand Oaks, CA 91362

March 5, 2019

The Conejo Valley Unified School District School Board (CVUSD) has received numerous requests to take a position on the proposed development of a 7-Eleven (market and gas station) on the vacant lot near Thousand Oaks High School (TOHS). We understand the Thousand Oaks Planning Commission will be discussing this proposed development at its upcoming meeting in April. As CVUSD respects the jurisdiction of the Planning Commission and City Council on this issue, the purpose of this letter is not to take a position one way or another, but to communicate those issues of concern to CVUSD as a community partner and stakeholder in the eventual outcome. While we understand there are many more considerations that the Planning Commission and City Council must take into account in deciding on the proposed development, we hope that appropriate consideration will be given to the issues and concerns outlined below.

Central to each of the identified issues and concerns is the reality that the proposed development has the significant potential to affect the well-being of our district's student population given its proximity to TOHS. TOHS is comprised of 2,070 students that attend school across the street from the proposed development, and will assuredly comprise a large portion of the customers that patronize both the proposed 7-Eleven and adjacent gas station. For that reason, in order to evaluate the concerns and feedback received from CVUSD staff, parents, students and other stakeholders, the Board agreed to establish a two-member ad hoc committee comprised of board trustees Cindy Goldberg and Jenny Fitzgerald. That ad hoc committee identified the specific concerns and issues detailed in this letter based on meetings and discussions with the following:

- Superintendent Mark McLaughlin
- Developer Taylor Megdal of Elliot Megdal and Associates
- TOHS Principal Eric Bergmann
- TOHS School Resource Officer - Deputy Elson Molina
- TOHS teachers who attended a meeting open to all TOHS teachers
- TOHS Student Senate
- President of the TOHS PTSA
- TOHS School Site Council
- Various other community members

Based on the feedback received as part of these efforts, the matters and issues of concern that we believe to be pertinent to your review that relate to the well-being of our students (whether for the proposed 7-Eleven establishment or any future potential use of the currently vacant lot), include the following:

- Traffic safety: The developer indicated that certain steps will be taken to reduce issues with traffic flow, including closing one of the entry/exit points to the lot. However, we request your full evaluation of whether the proposed use of the property, including a gas station at this location, may lead to increased traffic incidents. As part of this evaluation, please consider the existing heightened school traffic and dangerous turns (U-turns and left turns) in the immediate area of the subject lot and possible additional safety measures to protect students, such as the installation of in-pavement LED crosswalk lighting. It is important to note that students and other community members, including those participating in certain after school activities, pass by this location on foot on a regular basis.
- Security and student safety: Given the higher than average crime rates that can be associated with convenience stores, concerns were expressed regarding the security of the proposed establishment and the perimeter of TOHS, as well as the safety of students. We understand the proposed 24 hour establishment will include the installation of lights requested by the Thousand Oaks Sheriff's office and 32 cameras with a live feed to the Thousand Oaks Police Department and the office of TOHS' safety officer. However, it is our understanding that these camera feeds will not be monitored in real time. Consequently, as such measures will only be useful to review a potential security incident after it has occurred, we request your thorough evaluation of whether any potential use of this lot may increase crime in an area so close to TOHS.

- Alcohol, tobacco, and vaping products: We request that you consider the inclusion of a deed restriction prohibiting the sale of alcohol, tobacco/tobacco related products, and vaping products for the longest period of time permitted by law. In addition, in the interest of all CVUSD students, please consider passing a local ordinance(s) prohibiting the sale of these products within a certain distance from schools for new developments.
- Student health/nutrition: Many have expressed concerns regarding the availability of unhealthy food and beverage options that may be available at a convenience store like 7-Eleven. We have communicated these concerns directly to the developer, who has advised that the proposed 7-Eleven will include a section with fresh food options in order to address this concern. However, concerns remain about the many food and beverage options that will remain available through the proposed development, and we believe that further consideration should be given to the availability of additional fresh, healthy food and beverage options should it ultimately be approved.

Should the Planning Commission or City Council require any additional information or detail concerning the above-identified issues and concerns, the identified ad-hoc committee is available to further discuss such matters as needed. It is also important to note that, despite the identified matters, CVUSD recognizes the value in improving the immediate corridor. Our hope is only that any proposed improvement appropriately recognizes and accounts for the interests of those students at TOHS that will undoubtedly patronize such development, and that it strives to provide an establishment that is beneficial for such students.

Thank you in advance for your evaluation of these items as you consider the proposed usage of the subject lot, and for your continued community partnership in ensuring the very best for our district's students and community.

Sincerely,